

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 180370

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (TOLBERT, W.R.)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT TOLBERT STATE VISIT TO U.S.

REFS: A. STATE 177214; B. STATE 175654; C. MONROVIA 3577

1. FURTHER TO REF A, WE INFORMED LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR DENNIS JULY 16 THAT PRESIDENT FORD WOULD MEET WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT SEPTEMBER 22.

2. JULY 18, LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR AT LARGE HARMON RETURNED TO WASHINGTON FROM VISITS TO BALTIMORE AND AKRON AND REQUESTED MEETING WITH AF/W DIRECTOR JULY 19 BEFORE HIS SCHEDULED DEPARTURE THAT EVENING. ON JULY 19, LIBERIAN AMBASSADORS HARMON AND DENNIS AND ACTING DCM (NELSON) MET WITH THE NEW CHIEF OF PROTOCOL (AMBASSADOR BLACK), THE PROTOCOL COORDINATOR FOR THE VISIT (JAMIE KABLER), S/S PROJECT OFFICERS (IRA WOLF AND BARBARA BODINE), AF/W DIRECTOR, AND ACTING LIBERIA DESK OFFICER (MCGUIRE).

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3. AFTER INITIAL COURTESIES, AF/W DIRECTOR SUMMARIZED ARRANGEMENTS TO DATE FOR VISIT. HARMON THEN MADE LENGTHY STATEMENT IN WHICH HE EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE LIBERIA ATTACHES TO THIS VISIT, AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR LIBERIA AND FOR US RELATIONS WITH AFRICA. VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES

FOR THE VISIT WERE DISCUSSED, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. HARMON SAID THE GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND AND MAYOR OF BALTIMORE WERE INTERESTED IN A VISIT TO BALTIMORE IN VIEW OF THE SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BALTIMORE AND MONROVIA.

B. FIRESTONE WISHES THE PRESIDENT TO VISIT AKRON AND TO SPEND A NIGHT THERE.

C. THE LIBERIANS HAVE REQUESTED TIME FOR PRESIDENT TOLBERT TO ADDRESS THE UN, PROBABLY ON SEPTEMBER 29.

D. AMBASSADOR BLACK NOTED THAT S. DILLON RIPLEY, SECRETARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN, HOPED PRESIDENT TOLBERT COULD ATTEND A SMITHSONIAN CONFERENCE, PERHAPS ON SEPTEMBER 27.

E. PROTOCOL COORDINATOR RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT TO WILLIAMSBURG WHICH WAS WELL RECEIVED BY THE LIBERIANS.

F. AMBASSADOR HARMON SAID THE LIBERIANS HOPED FOR A SPEECH TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB AND AN APPEARANCE ON A MAJOR TV PROGRAM.

4. AMBASSADOR HARMON AGAIN RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ADDRESS TO A JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS. AF/W DIRECTOR REPLIED THAT THE APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE BY THE LIBERIAN EMBASSY TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND NOTED THAT CONGRESS WOULD BE IN THE FINAL DAYS OF ITS SESSION AND PRESSED FOR TIME.

5. AMBASSADOR HARMON SAID THAT MRS. TOLBERT WOULD ARRIVE IN THE US BEFORE THE PRESIDENT IN ORDER TO ADDRESS A  
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BAPTIST MEETING SEPTEMBER 12 IN HOUSTON.

6. THE TEXT OF A POSSIBLE JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VISIT WAS DISCUSSED. WE AGREED TO SEND A DRAFT TO THE EMBASSY IN MONROVIA FOR REFERRAL TO THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT. HARMON SAID HE HOPED ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD BE MADE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND WOULD INCLUDE THE DATES OF THE VISIT. A SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENT COULD INCLUDE ADDITIONAL DETAILS

OF THE VISIT.

7. REPRESENTATIVES OF DEPT AND LIBERIAN EMBASSY WILL MEET AGAIN AFTER GOL HAS COMMENTED ON POSSIBLE TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT TO WORK ON DETAILS OF VISIT.

8. FOLLOWING THIS MEETING, AMBASSADOR HARMON REQUESTED PROTOCOL COORDINATOR KABLER TO DRAW UP A TENTATIVE ILLUSTRATIVE SCHEDULE (SEPTTEL) THAT HE COULD TAKE BACK TO MONROVIA. DEPARTMENT REPS EMPHASIZED THE TENTATIVE NATURE OF THIS DRAFT SCHEDULE, AND THAT APART FROM THE ARRIVAL AT 10:30 A.M. SEPTEMBER 22, THE HOUR FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 12 NOON, AND PRESIDENT FORD'S DINNER FOR PRESIDENT TOLBERT AT 8:00 P.M. SEPTEMBER 22, THE OTHER ENGAGEMENTS LISTED WERE FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND MIGHT PROVE TO BE IMPOSSIBLE OR UNDESIRABLE.

9. HARMON, WHO WILL RETURN TO MONROVIA JULY 21, WAS CLEARLY VERY PLEASED BY THESE TWO MEETINGS AND ASSURED US AS HE LEFT THAT HE THOUGHT PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT WERE PROCEEDING VERY WELL.

10. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE SOONEST AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE REGARDING MRS. TOLBERT'S PLANS.

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